

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Reply in response to the non-final Office Action mailed September 28, 2007. Before this response, claims 1, 3-7, 9-20, 22-24, 26-30, 32-43, and 45-58 were pending, of which claims 1, 24, and 56 were independent. By this response, Applicants have canceled claims 1, 3-5, 22-24, 26-28, 45, 46, and 56-58 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants have rewritten dependent claims 6, 7, 14, 17, 29, 30, 37, 40, 47, 50, 51, 54, and 55 into independent form and have amended claims 7, 12, 30, and 35. Accordingly, after these amendments, claims 6, 7, 9-20, 29, 30, 32-43, and 47-55 are pending, of which claims 6, 7, 14, 17, 29, 30, 37, 40, 47, 50, 51, 54, and 55 are independent.

In the pending Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 22-28, 45, 46, and 56-58 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0133507 ("Holenstein et al.") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0093431 ("Cooke et al."). In this response, Applicants have canceled all of the currently rejected claims, thereby mooting all of the pending claim rejections. Only claims containing allowable subject matter remain pending (see discussion below).

The Examiner objected to claims 6, 7, 9-20, 32-43, and 47-55 as being dependent on rejected base claims, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.¹ See Office Action dated September 28, 2007, ¶ 12

¹ Paragraph 12 in the Office Action identified allowable subject matter in claims 46-55. However, Applicants believe the Examiner meant to identify claims 47-55, since claim 46 appears to have been rejected over prior art. See Office Action, ¶¶ 5 and 10.

("Allowable Subject Matter"). In this response, Applicants have rewritten the objected-to claims 6, 7, 14, 17, 29, 30, 37, 40, 47, 50, 51, 54, and 55 into independent form, thereby placing these claims in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 9-13, 15, 16, 18-20, 32-36, 38, 39, 41-43, 48, 49, 52, and 53 depend on allowable independent claims 6, 7, 14, 17, 29, 30, 37, 40, 47, or 51, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, all pending claims are in condition for allowance and timely allowance of the claims is earnestly solicited.

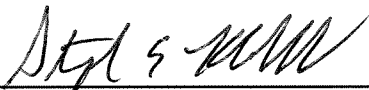
The preceding remarks are based only on the arguments in the Office Action, and therefore do not address patentable aspects of the invention that were not addressed by the Examiner in the Office Action. The claims may include other elements that are not shown, taught, or suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, the preceding remarks in favor of patentability are advanced without prejudice to other possible bases of patentability.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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